

## CONCURRENCE IN SENATE AMENDMENTS

AB 1279 (Muratsuchi and Cristina Garcia)

As Amended August 28, 2022

Majority vote

**SUMMARY**

Establishes the California Climate Crisis Act to declare the policy of the state both to achieve net zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2045, and to ensure that by 2045, statewide anthropogenic GHGs are reduced to at least 85% below 1990 levels.

**Senate Amendments**

- 1) Establish the policy of the state to do both of the following:
  - a) Achieve net zero GHGs as soon as possible, but no later than 2045, and to achieve and maintain net negative GHGs thereafter.
  - b) Ensure that, by 2045, statewide anthropogenic GHGs are reduced to at least 85% below the statewide GHG limit.
- 2) Require the Air Resources Board (ARB) to work with relevant state agencies to ensure that updates to the scoping plan identify and recommend measures to achieve the policy goals, and identify and implement a variety of policies and strategies that enable carbon dioxide removal solutions and carbon capture, utilization, and storage technologies in California to complement emissions reductions and achieve the aforementioned GHG reduction policy goals.
- 3) Require, by December 31, 2035, ARB to evaluate the feasibility and tradeoffs of achieving the policy goals and report its findings and recommendations to the Legislature.
- 4) Require ARB to annually report to the Joint Legislative Committee on Climate Change Policies.
- 5) Require the Legislative Analyst's Office to conduct independent analyses of ARB's progress toward the goals every two years and to prepare a report containing specified information to be made available to the public.
- 6) Require the California Climate Crisis Act to become operative only if Senate Bill 905 (Caballero Skinner) of the 2021–22 Regular Session is enacted and becomes operative on or before January 1, 2023.

**COMMENTS**

California has adopted GHG reduction targets to reduce the state's portfolio of climate emissions and facilitate emissions reductions across virtually every sector and region, but the impacts of climate change are exponentially escalating. Extreme heat, mega fires, rising sea levels, ongoing drought, and flooding have had direct impacts on public health, infrastructure, people's livelihoods, and local economies. The need to further reduce GHGs to spare the most significant impacts of climate change are critical to managing our resources and species' survival.

The recent Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) summarizes the latest scientific consensus on climate change. It finds that atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide have increased by 50% since the industrial revolution and continue to increase at a rate of two parts per million each year. By the 2030s, and no later than 2040, the world will exceed 1.5°C warming. In order to remain below 1.5°C, global net anthropogenic GHG emissions need to reach net zero by 2050.

California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment found that the costs to adapt to the impacts of climate change will be incredibly high. Specifically, the report found it could soon cost Californians \$200 million a year in increased energy bills to keep homes air conditioned; \$3 billion from the effects of a long drought on agriculture; and, \$18 billion to replace buildings inundated by rising seas. It also underscores the loss of life from heat waves, which could add more than 11,000 heat-related deaths a year by 2050 in California, and carry an estimated \$50 billion annual price tag.

ARB's report titled "Achieving Carbon Neutrality in California" highlights that carbon neutrality will necessitate the use of both gross emission reductions strategies and negative emission strategies. The relative contribution of these strategies will have implications on air quality and other potential health and community impacts, and encompass different risks in achieving the state's climate mandates.

Negative emissions strategies that use natural and working lands will also play a pivotal role in addressing climate change. Natural and working lands sequester carbon dioxide in forests, soils, and oceans. These lands act as carbon sinks and can be enhanced through land and ecosystem management practices. Likewise, natural and working lands can also represent a source of GHG emissions, due to land use changes such as deforestation and wildfires. Reducing GHG emissions from, and increasing sequestration on, natural and working lands is crucial in the state's long-term climate change strategy toward achieving carbon neutrality.

Earlier this year, this Legislature approved SCR 53 (McGuire) to declare that the State of California must commit to ensuring that its actions remain in alignment with the most current scientific findings regarding climate change, and do everything in its power to encourage a swift conversion to an ecologically, socially, and financially sustainable economy.

This bill aims to ensure that negative emissions strategies cannot replace aggressive strategies to reduce GHG emissions and to set the broad statewide policies on the use of negative emission strategies. The bill requires ARB to work with relevant state agencies to identify measures to achieve the policy goals, and identify and implement a variety of policies and strategies that enable carbon dioxide removal solutions and carbon capture, utilization, and storage technologies in California to complement emissions reductions and achieve the aforementioned GHG reduction policy goals, and ensure that all policies and programs undertaken to achieve carbon neutrality are permanent.

### **According to the Author**

Climate change is the defining crisis of our time and it is happening even more quickly than we originally thought. No corner of this state is immune from the devastating consequences of climate change. The rising temperatures are fueling environmental degradation, sea level rise, weather extremes such as drought, food and water insecurity, economic disruption, ocean acidification, and catastrophic wildfires.

According to experts, to avert the most catastrophic impacts of climate change, we must limit atmospheric warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius, which necessitates California reaching net zero emissions by mid-century.

This bill would require the state to achieve net zero emissions as soon as possible, but no later than 2045 and net negative GHG emissions thereafter. This bill also requires an emissions reduction level of 85%.

### **Arguments in Support**

Environmental Defense Fund, Natural Resources Defense Council, and the Climate Center, along with a suite of other environmental groups, write, "There is no doubt that ambitious action is needed to address climate change and its impacts. The latest IPCC report underscores that absent immediate and aggressive efforts to reduce climate pollution and build resilience to the impacts of climate change, the climate challenges that we already face will continue to worsen, further threatening the health and wellbeing of communities and the environment ... the bill takes a critical step in addressing the climate disaster, ensuring that the state actively works towards minimizing its contribution to it, as it aims to achieve net zero and net negative greenhouse gas emissions.

### **Arguments in Opposition**

The California Council for Environmental and Economic Balance (CCEEB) writes that absent a roadmap with the appropriate tools such as accelerated permitting of decarbonization projects, pore space ownership, unitization certainty, and extension of cap-and-trade to achieve accelerated emission reductions targets, they oppose to in AB 1279. "While we support carbon neutrality, CCEEB cannot support [this bill] without the critical policy tools necessary to achieve the significant additional emission reductions. This is due to regulatory and statutory barriers that will need reformation to achieve the pace and scale of projects for the transportation and energy system transformation necessary to achieve carbon neutrality."

## **FISCAL COMMENTS**

Unknown.

**VOTES:****ASM WATER, PARKS, AND WILDLIFE: 15-0-0**

**YES:** Eduardo Garcia, Megan Dahle, Bennett, Bigelow, Friedman, Cristina Garcia, Kalra, Levine, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Blanca Rubio, Salas, Smith, Villapudua, Ward

**ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 15-0-1**

**YES:** Lorena Gonzalez, Bigelow, Calderon, Carrillo, Chau, Megan Dahle, Davies, Fong, Gabriel, Levine, Quirk, Robert Rivas, Akilah Weber, Holden, Luz Rivas

**ABS, ABST OR NV:** Eduardo Garcia

**ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 75-0-3**

**YES:** Aguiar-Curry, Arambula, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Bigelow, Bloom, Boerner Horvath, Burke, Calderon, Carrillo, Cervantes, Chau, Chen, Chiu, Choi, Cooley, Cooper, Cunningham, Megan Dahle, Daly, Davies, Flora, Fong, Frazier, Friedman, Gabriel, Gallagher, Cristina Garcia, Eduardo Garcia, Gipson, Lorena Gonzalez, Gray, Grayson, Holden, Irwin, Jones-Sawyer, Kalra, Kiley, Lackey, Lee, Levine, Low, Mathis, Mayes, McCarty, Medina, Muratsuchi, Nazarian, Nguyen, O'Donnell, Patterson, Petrie-Norris, Quirk, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Reyes, Luz Rivas, Robert Rivas, Rodriguez, Blanca Rubio, Salas, Santiago, Seyarto, Smith, Stone, Ting, Valladares, Villapudua, Voepel, Waldron, Ward, Akilah Weber, Wicks, Wood

**ABS, ABST OR NV:** Maienschein, Mullin, Rendon

**UPDATED**

VERSION: August 28, 2022

CONSULTANT: Paige Brokaw / NAT. RES. /(916) 319-2092

FN: 0004574